

Success Unsung, CIA Chief Claims

WASHINGTON — (UPI) — The public hears only about the failures or abuses, alleged or real, of the Central Intelligence Agency.

What about its successes? CIA Director William E. Colby once told a largely hostile forum discussing the agency that it at times harbored "bad secrets," "nonsecrets" and "good secrets."

During a recent interview at his headquarters in the countryside of Northern Virginia, Colby was asked whether he could talk about some of the "good secrets" — CIA successes.

"This is hard," he said, "because if they're going to be successful they will be quiet."

"Let's put it this way. In the 1940s and 1950s there's no question about it that there was an attempt to expand Communism, to take over Western Europe — political action among other things."

"There were various things done at that time which I can't go into. But the end result — not that it was the CIA that did it itself — that (Communist) hope of taking over Western Europe by political action failed."

The same could be said, he added, "in the early 1960s of

expanding Cuban subversion throughout the Western Hemisphere and Communist attempts later in Africa.

"There was a great vogue for the guerrilla insurgency. You look at it today. Those efforts failed. Again that wasn't just intelligence, but intelligence made a contribution."

"In Africa, there was a rather extensive effort to profit from the withdrawal and decolonization of several countries. And there was a contest there in various regards. But essentially, the Communists did not achieve any great position in Africa."

In still another area, Colby said the Strategic Arms Limitation talks could never have got off the ground without some form of inspection — and that required a highly sophisticated intelligence capability.

The Russians, he said, "didn't like foreigners tramping around their countryside. So we couldn't get anywhere until we developed this capability of looking in and counting the missile launchers, telling exactly how much there is."

He referred to U.S. — and Soviet — "spy satellites," which continuously streak over each other's country and China, hundreds of miles high, photographing with re-

markable detail what goes on below from missile-silo building to troop movements.

Generally, how was his main opposite number, the Soviet KGB secret police, doing these days?

"KGB is the CIA, FBI, state police, border guards, . . . everything," Colby said.

"But if you merely stick to its activities outside their own country, it's bigger than ours. They have more Soviet citizens traveling abroad and traveling here."

While there are continued incidents of bugging, attempted compromise, blackmail, recruitment, bribery and financial offers to Americans by Soviet agents, Colby said, the KGB is playing it a bit cool these days because it is so much easier for them to operate in an open society.

"They are quite relaxed and easy about the way they can reach out and use other agencies and people for their purposes or work or for their cover — quite a lot easier than ours," he said.

"They are getting to learn that a lot of information is freely available that doesn't have to be gathered through espionage."

How did he feel about that?

"Basically, you cannot object to that," Colby said. "In fact, I welcome it because that's only a good thing."